

RURAL SAFETY INNOVATION PROGRAM

Federal Register Notice of February 29, 2008

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Q:** Can State highway agencies apply for their own roads?
Answer: Yes, state highway agencies are eligible to apply for projects on state owned rural roads.

2. **Q:** Can a county apply that is both urban and rural?
Answer: Yes. Counties can apply for projects on their roads that are in rural areas, even if the county also has urban areas. The road that the project is on must have a rural functional classification. Refer to Question 8. for what is meant by rural area, and functional classification. For Delta Region Transportation Development Program (DRTDP) funding the project must have the endorsement of the State department of transportation.

3. **Q:** Does the project have to be on the Federal-Aid system?
Answer: ITS program funds may be used on all public roads. DRTDP funds can only be used on “Federal-aid highways”, which means “highways on the federal-aid highway systems and all other public roads not classified as local roads or rural minor collectors”. The project must be on a rural road to qualify for the Rural Safety Innovation Program.

4. **Q:** Can a local agency or county apply directly?
Answer: Yes, applications can be accepted from both states and local agencies for ITS program funded projects. It is highly recommended that non-state highway agencies partner with their State department of transportation. Refer to section D. “i. *Eligible applicants*” in the Federal Register Notice. The endorsement of the State DOT is a specific requirement of the DRTDP funded projects.

5. **Q:** Can a recipient of the DRTDP funds be someone other than a State or MPO?
Answer: SAFETEA-LU Section 1308 states: “Eligible Recipients- A state transportation department or metropolitan planning organization in a Delta Region State may receive and administer funds provided under the program.” Therefore, FHWA may only award DRTDP funds directly to the State DOT or MPO. However, the State DOT or MPO could administer the funds through a sub-recipient, and the funding could be used on the Federal-aid highway roads of other public agencies, if allowed by State law.

6. **Q:** Can Federal Land agencies apply for a project?
Answer: Yes. Federal Land Management Agencies can apply. The eligibility and other requirements of the DRTDP and the ITS program, whichever is requested, do apply. Some of the specific Delta program requirements that should be noted are: the project must be on a Federal-aid highway, and endorsement of the State department of transportation is required. FHWA may

only award DRTDP funds directly to the State DOT or MPO. However, it may be possible for the State DOT or MPO to administer the funds through the Federal Land Management Agency, under agreement between FHWA and the other Federal agency.

7. **Q:** Can Tribal government agencies apply for a project?
Answer: Yes. Tribal governments can apply. The eligibility and other requirements of the DRTDP and the ITS program, whichever is requested, do apply. Some of the specific Delta program requirements that should be noted are: the project must be on a Federal-aid highway, and endorsement of the State department of transportation is required. FHWA may only award DRTDP funds directly to the State DOT or MPO. However, the State DOT or MPO could administer the funds through a sub-recipient such as a Tribal government, if allowed by State law.
8. **Q:** What is meant by Rural?
Answer: Refer to the FHWA Functional Classification Guidelines: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/fctoc.htm> - Area Definitions. Rural areas are defined as areas outside of urban and urbanized areas including small urban (5000 or more population) areas.
9. **Q:** Can a vendor or private company apply for funds?
Answer: No, vendors and private sector companies cannot apply but they can be partners with public road owners and provide a share of the project cost.
10. **Q:** Can a vendor or private company be a partner of a project application?
Answer: Yes, they can be a partner and provide a share of the cost.
11. **Q:** What type of applications are we looking for?
Answer: Please refer to "E. Contents of Application for Phase I" in the Federal Register Notice.
12. **Q:** What is the application process including dates?
Answer: Refer to "C. Application Process" in the Federal Register Notice. Applications must be submitted by April 14, 2008. Selected applicants that will be invited to submit detailed Proposals for Phase II will be notified in May 2008. Proposals for Phase II will be due in July 2008. Proposals selected for funding will be announced in August. Exact dates will be provided to the selected applicants when available. Funds should be obligated by September 30, 2008.
13. **Q:** Could you please list the "Delta States"?
Answer: The Delta Region States are AL, AR, IL, KY, LA, MS, MO, and TN as stated in the Federal Register Notice. Please note that only certain counties within these states are eligible for DRTDP funding. These counties can be found at: <http://www.dra.gov/about/maps.aspx>
14. **Q:** Where can I find information about the Delta Regional Authority?
Answer: Refer to the Delta Regional Authority web page. <http://www.dra.gov/>

15. **Q:** Where can I find more information on the requirements of the Delta Region Transportation Development Program (DRTDP)?
Answer: The statutory criteria for the DRTDP can be found at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/ind1308drtdp.htm>
16. **Q:** Are behavioral safety issues fundable such as education, enforcement etc., as a part of this program?
Answer: Safety activities in the ITS program area are eligible which includes applicable “law enforcement” activities as stated in the Notice.
17. **Q:** Can a University be a partner for an ITS project application?
Answer: Yes.
18. **Q:** Are rural highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects eligible for the program?
Answer: This type of project is eligible to the extent that the type and scope of work is eligible for either the DRTDP or the ITS program.
19. **Q:** Is there a range of award amounts or number of awards being considered?
Answer: “It is estimated that competitive awards will be made in the range of \$200 thousand to \$2 million per project” as stated in the Federal Register Notice.
20. **Q:** For ITS projects, would architecture conformity and systems engineering analysis requirements apply? **Answer:** ITS projects should comply with 23CFR 940, Intelligent Transportation System Architecture and Standards as applied in your state or region. Note that the regulations allow for some flexibility for testing and evaluation projects.
21. **Q:** Will these frequently asked questions, with answers, be displayed on a website?
Answer: They will be displayed on the FHWA Office of Safety web site.
22. **Q:** Do you expect further solicitations after this one?
Answer: There are no plans for further solicitations.
23. **Q:** Could you combine an engineering and behavioral solution?
Answer: See question 16. Safety activities in the ITS program area are eligible which includes applicable “law enforcement” activities as stated in the Notice, and appropriate engineering activities. They could be combined as appropriate.
24. **Q:** Is there any match waiver?
Answer: The normal match requirements of the DRTDP and the ITS programs apply. However, for the DRTDP, SAFETEA-LU Section 1308 states: “Federal Share – Amounts provided by the Delta Regional Authority to carry out a project under this subsection may be applied to the non-Federal share of the project required by section 120 of title 23, United States Code.”

25. **Q:** Can project funds be used for design and NEPA?

Answer: Yes, to the extent applicable to the DRTDP and ITS programs.

26. **Q:** The FR speaks to items that should be included in the application. Is there a specific template for the application that is going to be dispersed for consistency?

Answer: No. There will not be an application template. Applicants should refer to E. Contents of Application for Phase I in the Federal Register Notice.

27. **Q:** Is co-mingling of funds allowed?

Answer: Yes. Combining funds from different sources and leveraging is allowed provided that the match requirements of the DRTDP and the ITS programs are satisfied.